

Box: Non-Fee Amendment  
Assistant Commissioner for Patents  
Washington, D.C. 20231

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Sir:

In response to the Office Action mailed March 27, 2002, and the Examiner Interviews held April 12, 2002, applicants respectfully request that the following amendments be entered for the above-identified United States Patent Application:

IN THE CLAIMS:

Amend claim 21 to read as follows:

a<sup>1</sup> <sup>13</sup>21. (Amended) The system according to claim <sup>13</sup>16, wherein said controller comprises means for selecting an alternator setpoint voltage based on the amount of electrical energy available to operate the vehicle and the estimated vehicle electrical load.

[ Add new claims 25 and 26 to read as follows:

a<sup>2</sup> <sup>20</sup>25. (New) The method according to claim 1, further comprising the steps:  
obtaining information indicative of vehicle electrical load;  
communicating the vehicle load information to a controller;  
estimating the vehicle electrical load using the vehicle load information communicated to the controller.

<sup>21</sup>26. (New) The system according to claim <sup>13</sup>16, wherein said controller comprises:  
means for selecting a plurality of alternator voltage regulation strategies based at least in part on the stored